COMMANDERS DIGEST

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE • WASHINGTON, D.C.

LIBRARY
MAR 8 1968

Vol. 4, No. 15 February 21, 1968

RECEIVED

GUEST LECTURER—Gen. Thomas P. Gerrity (left), Commander of the Air Force Logistics Command, arrives at Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala., to address the Class of 1968 at Air Command and Staff College. He is greeted by Lt. Gen. John W. Carpenter (center), Air University Commander, and Maj. Gen. Harry J. Sands Jr., Commandant of Air Command and Staff College.

Defense Dept. Standardizes Procedures For Handling 'Official Use Only' Material

Instructions setting forth uniform standards for the marking, control and protection of unclassified records and documents considered to be "for official use only," and exempt from public disclosure, have been issued by the Department of Defense.

Contained in DOD Instruction 5025.9, the instructions apply to the entire defense establishment and spell out the procedures for dissemination, transmission and disposal of documents marked for official use only.

Under the instruction, unclassified material which is authorized to be withheld from the general public "and for a significant reason should not be given general circulation," whether marked or not, should be considered within the "for official use only" category.

Department of Defense personnel are not relieved of the responsibility of reviewing such material prior to public release, regardless of whether it has been marked.

"Requests for public release of documents which are exempt from public release . . . shall be referred to the originator of the document or a higher authority for determination as to whether the exemption is still applicable or appropriate and whether

(Continued on page 4)

LBJ Recommends RVN Economic Aid Of $480 Million

President Johnson has recommended to Congress "a program of $480 million to carry forward our economic assistance effort in Vietnam."

He noted this effort will be intensified by the need to restore and reconstruct the cities and towns attacked in early February.

The President explained, "Defense of Vietnam requires more than success on the battlefield. The people of Vietnam are building the economic and social base to preserve the independence we are helping them to defend.

"Since 1965, when galloping inflation loomed and continuity of government was repeatedly destroyed, the people of Vietnam have achieved two major civil victories which rank with any gallantry in combat:

—They have written a Constitution and established representative local and national governments through free elections, despite a concerted campaign of terror, assassination and intimidation.

—Runaway inflation has been averted, and the foundation laid for a thriving economy, despite the enormous stresses of war.

"But still the innocent victims of war and terrorism must be cared for; persistent inflationary pressures must continue to be controlled; and the many problems faced by a new government under wartime conditions must be overcome. The framework for economic and social progress has been established. We must help the Vietnamese people to build the institutions needed to make it work."

President Johnson said that in the

(Continued on page 4)

Sec. McNamara, Gen. Wheeler Queried on Khe Sanh Defense

Questions have been raised on whether Khe Sanh is actually defensible; the use of nuclear weapons; the recent surprise attacks by North Vietnamese.

After appearances before the Subcommittee on Department of Defense, House Appropriations Committee, Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara and General Earle Wheeler, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, met with the press.

General Wheeler appeared Feb. 14 and Secretary McNamara, Feb. 15.

Excerpts from statements between General Wheeler and the press:

Question: General Wheeler, Senator Morton raised the question today on whether Khe Sanh is actually defensible.

General Wheeler: I think that I'm on record before the TV cameras, on the radio and in the press as stating that after the Joint Chiefs of Staff had reviewed General Westmoreland's plans and evaluated his preparations, that we believe that Khe Sanh is defensible and we supported his decision to defend it.

Question: Assuming we win the battle of Khe Sanh, what will we have won?

General Wheeler: You will have won the opportunities to inflict a very serious defeat upon the North Vietnamese Regular Army; you will have protected the two northern provinces of South Vietnam from invasion by the enemy; and I would suggest that you will have won a psychological victory as well because you will have reassured the people in the northern portion of South Vietnam that they can be secure from invasion by the North Vietnamese.

Question: What about the speculation that the United States may be falling into a trap by allowing the North Vietnamese to choose the site and conditions of battle?

General Wheeler: Well, I'm afraid I can't quote for the radio and TV the words of General Abrams at the time of the Battle of Bastogne. But you remember, paraphrasing it carefully, he said those fellows have got us surrounded again, poor guys.

Question: There is a lot of speculation up here on the Hill that ultimately we may have to use nuclear weapons. What can you say on that subject?

General Wheeler: I do not think that nuclear weapons will be required to defend Khe Sanh.

Question: We have about secured the city of Hue and the other cities appear to be back in our control, temporarily at least. What's to prevent the Viet Cong from overrunning them again?

General Wheeler: The same things that prevented them from holding them before. Namely, the Vietnamese, the Free World forces, and the United States forces. You must remember that the ARVN, the Vietnamese forces, bore the brunt of this TET offensive. They've acquitted themselves well, they fought bravely and repulsed the enemy in almost every instance. They will not be taken by a TET surprise again.

And while I'm on the subject, ladies and gentlemen, I would like to say this. TET is a sacred period to the Vietnamese, all Vietnamese. It's a combination of Christmas, New Year, and Easter. It's a time when every man is supposed to go back to his home village. It's a time of peace and good will when a man pays respect to his ancestors, visits with his friends, and then enjoys the good things of life. This attack mounted at this time was not only a cynical violation of a truce which the North Vietnamese and the VC had proposed, but I believe in a very real sense, in the minds of the many North Vietnamese, was an act of treachery and sacrilege.

Question: About two months ago General Westmoreland said that there was a strong probability or possibility at least that some men could be returned from Vietnam in 1968, and now he's called for the immediate dispatch of 10,000 more. How do you reconcile those two statements?

General Wheeler: I would suggest

(Continued on page 4)

Dialogue between Secretary McNamara and the press:

Question: In view of rising criticism in the Congress, Mr. Secretary, of the war in Vietnam and its conduct and Senator Kennedy's criticism, in particular, that you and the Administration are pursuing a policy of illusion, has any major evaluation of the war and its conduct begun?

Secretary McNamara: No. I think that our objective is as we've stated it before. It's very limited objective—it's not to destroy the government of North Vietnam, not to overthrow the Communist regime of North Vietnam, it's simply to preserve the right of the people of South Vietnam to shape their own destiny. We believe that the military campaign that has been laid out to accomplish that is the proper campaign and we propose to pursue it.

Question: Do you have any idea when the battle of Khe Sanh is likely to begin? Is there any way of knowing?

Secretary McNamara: No. Short of inquiring of the North Vietnamese high command, there is no way for us to obtain that specific item of intelligence.

Question: Mr. Secretary, for the first time General Westmoreland seems to be coming under some criticism. I'm sure you have an answer to it, what is it?

(Continued on page 4)

COMMANDERS DIGEST

THIS PUBLICATION CONTAINS OFFICIAL INFORMATION, NEWS AND POLICY, DIRECT FROM WASHINGTON AUTHORIZED SOURCES.

Published semi-weekly by Armed Forces Press Service, 1117 N. 19th St., Arlington, Va. 22209, a unified activity of the Office of Information for the Armed Forces, OASD(M&RA). Reproduction of content is authorized. Suggested dateline for materials used is WASHINGTON (AFPS).

A DECADE OF WORLD CHANGE*

Very great changes have occurred in the world during the past decade. . . . In the seven years since I first came before this Committee to testify on our defense programs, the military and economic strength of the United States and its allies has increased dramatically. But so have the difficulty and complexity of the problems we have had to face in framing our military policies. These years have seen the acceleration of a number of trends which will make the world of the 1970s very different from the world of the early 1960s.

Today, as then, our military posture remains rooted in a commitment to collective defense. We and our allies are demonstrating this commitment every day in Vietnam.

The U.S. and the Communist World

Since the early 1960s the divisions within the camp of our adversaries, already apparent then, have both deepened and widened. Indeed, there are now not simply two centers of communism but several: Havana shows little inclination to follow the lead of Moscow or Peking, and is itself trying to exert a lead over the splintered Communist movements of the developing world. In Moscow, we still detect a desire to undermine the institutions of many nations and the influence of the United States. But we find this desire tempered by a prudence powerfully reinforced by a justly-held fear of nuclear war.

At the same time that we find ourselves engaged in a conflict with North Vietnam and its South Vietnamese supporters to preserve the principle that political change must not be brought about by externally directed violence and military force, we find ourselves engaged in many forms of peaceful competition with other Communist states. In the world of the late 1940s and early 1950s, when our adversary seemed monolithic, such a situation would have been unimaginable. Yet today it would be as short-sighted for us to fail to seek peaceful accommodation (in those activities in which this may be possible) with the Soviet Union and its Eastern European allies as it would be for us to fail to maintain the credibility of our deterrent against Moscow's improved strategic systems—or to fail to resist aggression in Korea or Vietnam.

Policy of Collective Defense

Thus, circumstances . . . have changed greatly from those of the early 1960s. But our goals remain the same. Fundamentally, what is at issue . . . is the kind of world in which we and others wish to live. When this Nation made the decision at the end of World War II to base its own security on the principle of collective defense, it was with the hope that there could be created, in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter, a world in which even the smallest state could look forward to an independent existence.

Some years later, in a world already familiar with the gap between Communist promise and Communist reality —and with Communist aggression as well—we sought to achieve this same high purpose by aligning ourselves with other like-minded nations in a series of multilateral and bilateral mutual defense treaties. By the close of 1955, this system of interlocking alliances had grown to include the Rio Treaty in the Western Hemisphere, NATO in Europe, SEATO and ANZUS in the Far East and the bilateral mutual defense agreements with Korea, Japan, the Republic of China, and the Philippines—a total of some 40-odd sovereign nations bound together in an effort to defend their freedom and prevent the further extension of Communist influence and hegemony.

Looking back over the history of the last two decades, I believe it is fair to say that this system of alliances has substantially achieved its purpose. Although the record is less than perfect, the outward thrust of Soviet and Red Chinese aggression has been generally contained and the independence of even the smallest member of the alliances has been preserved.

The Price of Security

Collective security, however, has had its price. The members of the alliances have had to support large and costly military forces for many years, with small prospect of an early reduction. Moreover, we, and some of our allies, have had to pay a particularly high price, both in lives and in wealth, for the alliances' achievements—first in Korea during the early 1950s and now again in Southeast Asia.

That the American people have become somewhat disillusioned and weary with the problems of the rest of the world is readily understandable: for many years we have borne a large share of the burden of world peace and security, and of assistance to the developing nations.

But we must never forget that of all nations we have the most at stake. The existence of an open, outward-looking, humane society in the United States depends upon the vitality of similar societies elsewhere. We must also never forget that our burden is large because our capacity is large—so much larger in fact, than that of any other nation as to make comparisons misleading. For better or for worse—hopefully, for better—we are preeminent, with all of the obligations which accrue to leadership. . . . We must not in weariness or disillusionment abandon our international role, or neglect to face up to the real implications of new and old alternatives.

---

* *Excerpts from Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara's recent Annual Posture Statement before the Senate Armed Services Committee. This is the first of several Backgrounders on Secretary McNamara's assessment of the international situation.*

General Wheeler

(Continued from page 2)

that there's a somewhat different situation now than there was a few months ago, namely, he's been coping with and is coping with an unprecedented attack or series of attacks by the North Vietnamese and by the Viet Cong over a wide area of the country. He has merely asked, prudently, I believe, for additional forces with which to face the heavy North Vietnamese buildup in the two northern provinces of South Vietnam.

Question: You don't believe he was too overly optimistic at the time?

General Wheeler: I have never noticed that General Westmoreland was a pessimist or an optimist. He's more of a realist.

Question: There have been severe dislocations—both socially, economically, politically and militarily—in Vietnam as a result of the guerrilla raids. What's the outlook for the future now?

General Wheeler: Well, there are pluses and minuses as there always are in any military action. On the minus side, the South Vietnamese to date have lost something over 2,000 killed. This, of course, has eroded the strength of their units. Moreover, a number of their men were on TET holiday leave, some of them have not been able to get back to their units because of the difficulty of travel. These are the minuses. On the other hand, they have defeated the enemy, and troops that defeat the enemy usually have their morale go up. General Westmoreland told me this morning on the telephone that yesterday (last night our time) he visited the ARVN 51st Infantry Regiment, up in the northern provinces, and found that their morale was extremely high because they had a most successful battle with North Vietnamese regular forces.

Now, on the political side in the psychological area, you have pluses and you have minuses. Some South Vietnamese, according to reports we receive, are outraged by the violation of TET by the VC and the North Vietnamese; they are outraged and angered by the brutality that they have displayed toward the civilian population, the destruction of their homes and their property. On the other hand, there are no doubt those who are frightened because they will feel that the security in which they have hitherto lived is now no longer insured to them. And now I think I better go.

Document Handling

(Continued from Page 1)

a significant purpose would be served by withholding the document from public release."

Exempt under the instruction are publications, pamphlets, reprints, etc., which are already in general circulation.

The instruction does not place any restrictions on dissemination of unclassified documents or records considered for official use only between DOD and DOD contractors and grantees when conducting official business with defense officials. However, such material will be "handled in such a manner to preclude disclosure of the material to the public."

Personnel handling "for official use only" information are authorized to disclose the material to persons in other departments, agencies and activities of the Executive and Judicial branches when it is determined that the information is required to carry out a governmental function.

Documents released to members of Congress or the Government Accounting Office should be reviewed to determine whether the information still requires marking and if so an explanation of the significance of the marking made clear to the recipient.

Records and documents marked for official use only should not be left unattended on desks and at the end of the working day should be filed "out of sight" in areas with internal building security or locked in desks, files or safes where such security is not provided.

Termination of the official use only marking will be authorized by the document's originator or some higher authority when it is determined that the information no longer requires protection from public disclosure.

Vietnam Economic Aid

(Continued from page 1)

coming year, the United States will:

—Improve our assistance to refugees and civilian casualties. The wages of aggression are always paid in the blood and misery of the innocent. Our determination to resist aggression must be matched by our compassion for its helpless victims.

—Intensify agricultural programs aimed at increasing rice production by 50 percent in the next four years.

—Concentrate our education effort toward the government's goal of virtually universal elementary education by 1971.

—Stress, in our import programs, the key commodities needed for agricultural and industrial growth.

"The rapid program expansion of the past two years—in dollars, people and diversity of activities—is needed. The emphasis in the coming year will be on concentration of resources on the most important current programs.

"We will pursue these constructive programs in Vietnam with the same energy and determination with which we resist aggression. They are just as vital to our ultimate success.

Sec. McNamara

(Continued from page 2)

Secretary McNamara: Quite undeserved. I know of no general of U.S. forces in this history that has led his men more brilliantly, whose forces have a higher morale, or who has accomplished more militarily, and I think the criticism of him that I have read of in the press is very undeserved.

Question: Mr. Secretary, yesterday General Wheeler touched on the subject of nuclear weapons. Can you say if their possible use in Vietnam, particularly Khe Sanh, has been discussed by the Administration?

Secretary McNamara: It has not been discussed.

Question: It's never been raised in any discussion?

Secretary McNamara: It has not been raised in any discussion, and it has not been discussed.

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.
Price 5 cents (single copy). Subscription Price: $2.50 per year; $3.25 additional for foreign mailing.